

## Message Text

SECRET

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ORIGIN MCT-01

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 L-01 EB-04 NSC-05 INR-05  
CIAE-00 SP-02 NSAE-00 AF-04 ARA-10 EA-06 NEA-07  
EUR-08 IO-06 SY-02 DODE-00 PER-01 OPR-01 A-01  
SIG-01 MMO-01 /081 R

DRAFTED BY M/CT:H ISHAM:PD

APPROVED BY M/CT:H ISHAM

D:MR. LAMB

M: MR. READ

L - MR. FELDMAN

EB/AV: A J WHITE

NSC- WODUM

INR:MPACKMAN

-----009259 280619Z /15

R 272337Z MAR 78

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO ALL DIPLOMATIC AND CONSULAR POSTS

S E C R E T STATE 078860

LIMDIS, INFORM CONSULS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EAIR, PINS

SUBJECT:SECURITY THREATS TO US OR FOREIGN AIR CARRIERS:  
POLICY AND PROCEDURES

FOR CHIEF OF MISSION OR PRINCIPAL OFFICER

### 1. INTRODUCTION

US AIRCRAFT SERVING INTERNATIONAL ROUTES REMAIN  
POTENTIAL TARGETS FOR SABOTAGE OR HIJACKING ATTEMPTS. IN  
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THIS CONTEXT, IT IS USEFUL TO SUMMARIZE EXISTING POLICY  
OBJECTIVES AND PROCEDURES FOR COLLECTING AND  
EVALUATING INFORMATION ON THREATS AGAINST US OR FOREIGN  
AIRCRAFT, ACTING TO COMBAT THEM, AND FOR ISSUING SUCH  
PUBLIC WARNINGS AS MAY BE APPROPRIATE.

### 2. COLLECTION AND EVALUATION

THE US INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY PLACES A HIGH PRIORITY ON THE COLLECTION OF INFORMATION ON FOREIGN TERRORIST THREATS TO US OR FOREIGN AIR CARRIERS. WHEN SUCH INFORMATION IS ACQUIRED, IT IS EVALUATED AS TO CREDIBILITY AND SOURCE RELIABILITY AND DISSEMINATED PROMPTLY

TO THE FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION (FAA) AND OTHER CONCERNED GOVERNMENT AGENCIES. WHEN THE THREAT CONCERNS US CARRIER(S), INFORMATION IS PASSED BY FAA TO THAT CARRIER, AS MAY BE APPROPRIATE, TO ENABLE THE CARRIER TO INTRODUCE PREVENTIVE MEASURES. IN THE CASE OF THREATS TO FOREIGN CARRIERS, SUCH INFORMATION WOULD USUALLY BE COMMUNICATED TO THE APPROPRIATE FOREIGN GOVERNMENT SECURITY AGENCY THROUGH INTELLIGENCE CHANNELS.

### 3. POLICY OBJECTIVES

IN SEEKING TO ANTICIPATE AND COUNTER TERRORIST THREATS, OUR PRIMARY OBJECTIVES ARE TO:

-- PROTECT AIR TRAVELERS OF ALL NATIONALITIES TO THE MAXIMUM DEGREE POSSIBLE;

-- PROVIDE USG EMPLOYEES AND THE US TRAVELING PUBLIC WITH EFFECTIVE AND EQUIVALENT LEVELS OF PROTECTION;  
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-- ASSURE CONTINUED CIVIL AIR SERVICE UNDER CONDITIONS OF MAXIMUM SAFETY CONSISTENT WITH RECOMMENDED ICAO STANDARDS.

### 4. SAFETY MEASURES

A WIDE RANGE OF ADDITIONAL SECURITY MEASURES CAN BE APPLIED BY AIR CARRIERS TO COUNTER A RELIABLE, REASONABLY SPECIFIC THREAT. IN ADDITION, FLIGHTS CAN BE CANCELLED AND ROUTES ALTERED IN CASE OF NEED. THE FAA, ACTING IN CLOSE CONSULTATION WITH THE US CARRIERS OVER WHICH IT HAS REGULATORY AUTHORITY, WILL DETERMINE WHAT MEASURES ARE APPROPRIATE. WITH RESPECT TO FOREIGN CARRIERS, FAA CAN FACILITATE THEIR REQUEST FOR SECURITY ASSISTANCE IN THE US, RECOMMEND ADDITIONAL SECURITY MEASURES, AND AS A LAST RESORT, REQUIRE THE CANCELLATION OF CERTAIN FLIGHTS OR ALTERATION OF ROUTES OF SUCH FLIGHTS.

### 5. PUBLIC ADVISORIES

PUBLIC WARNINGS (AS DISTINCT FROM FAA ADVISORIES TO

THE CARRIERS) WILL BE LIMITED TO RELATIVELY RARE CASES, WHEN IT IS CONSIDERED THAT THE THREAT IS REAL AND THAT ADDITIONAL OR EVEN EXTRAORDINARY SECURITY MEASURES MAY NOT BE CONSIDERED ADEQUATE TO MEET AN ACCEPTABLE LEVEL OF SAFETY. FOR EXAMPLE, WARNINGS MIGHT BE WARRANTED WHEN THE APPROPRIATE FOREIGN GOVERNMENTS OR AIR CARRIERS, HAVING BEEN ADVISED OF A THREAT,

NEVERTHELESS HAVE FAILED TO TAKE ADEQUATE MEASURES. NORMALLY, SUCH WARNINGS WILL BE ISSUED ONLY AFTER HOST GOVERNMENTS HAVE BEEN INFORMED AND PROVIDED AN OPPORTUNITY TO COMPLY.

IN EACH CASE, THE NSC SPECIAL COORDINATION COMMITTEE,

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ACTING UPON THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE NSC/SCC WORKING GROUP ON TERRORISM, WILL DETERMINE WHETHER A PUBLIC ADVISORY WILL BE ISSUED.

#### 6. GUIDANCE TO POSTS

WHEN POSTS RECEIVE INFORMATION INDICATING A SPECIFIC AND IMMINENT THREAT TO US OR FOREIGN AIR CARRIERS, THEY WILL INFORM THE DEPARTMENT BY THE MOST EXPEDITIOUS MEANS AVAILABLE, AND MAKE ANY OPERATIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS THEY DEEM APPROPRIATE. PROPER CLASSIFICATION AND DISTRIBUTIONAL CONTROLS SHALL BE APPLIED TO PROTECT SENSITIVE SOURCES. POSTS WILL ISSUE NO WARNINGS TO USG PERSONNEL OR OTHERWISE ADVISE STAFF ON TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS UNTIL THEY RECEIVE THE DEPARTMENT'S INSTRUCTIONS. THE DEPARTMENT, THE FAA, THE CARRIERS AND THE HOST GOVERNMENT WILL WORK CLOSELY IN ALL CASES TO ASSURE THAT EFFECTIVE, TIMELY, APPROPRIATE AND WELL-COORDINATED MEASURES ARE TAKEN TO COUNTER THREATS TO CIVIL AVIATION SAFETY, FROM WHATEVER SOURCE.

THIS GUIDANCE IS NOT INTENDED TO PRECLUDE THE CHIEF OF MISSION FROM TAKING THOSE ACTIONS IN RESPONSE TO AN IMMEDIATE AND SPECIFIC SITUATION NECESSARY TO PROTECT AMERICAN LIVES.

#### 7. MISSION RESPONSE

ANY COMMENTS WHICH CHIEFS OF MISSION MAY HAVE ON THE FOREGOING WILL BE WELCOME. VANCE

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## Message Attributes

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**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
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**Concepts:** AIRCRAFT HIJACKING, TERRORISTS, THREATS  
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**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 27 mar 1978  
**Decaption Date:** 20 Mar 2014  
**Decaption Note:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
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**Review Markings:**  
Sheryl P. Walter  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
20 Mar 2014  
**Markings:** Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014